/381 cont./

352 The interior arrangement is the same in either a dome-shaped hut or a conical hut. Actually, to be exact, there is no arrangement, since furniture and household furnishings are entirely absent. There are neither stools nor benches. The interior wall is neither covered nor decorated. Small baskets and leather pouches, pieces of meat, and fungi are hung on short pegs made of broken-off twigs. Tools and implements, ornaments, and other trifles are shoved between the poles of the framework. There is no floor
342 built as such, but while construction is going on the ground is stamped down. The natives like to dig out the entire interior surface, sometimes as much as 50 centimeters deep, and this shallow depression is a good protection against wind and cold air from outside. A preferred campsite is the dry, loose gravel that does not have to be leveled off, but is cleared of dirt, algae, and wet leaves. If the subsoil happens to be very wet or puddles are formed in persistent rain, pieces of bark are strewn about so that one does
354 not have to sit in the water. Sometimes, if too much water comes in, a layer of gravel has to be built up under the place for the fire, and the fire itself laid higher.

In the ordinary dwellings the fire is in the center, and the occupants squat around it in a circle. They are careful to maintain a broad, even glow which gives off little smoke but sends out abundant heat. The hours when heavy storms whirl the smoke around inside the hut are extremely distressing. In such cases the entrance is blocked with tree trunks or covered with a leather curtain. At night the natives regularly use something to close off the entrance securely. During the day and in good weather they let the air freely enter the hut. They move close to the entrance or they even squat out of doors beside the hut and keep a second fire going outside. In spite of a good covering, the loose construction does not prevent rain and snow /382/ from entering (31).

31. "Air circulates freely through the numerous interstices between the uprights of the hut. Rain, snow, or hail follows the same path, and the Fuegians are little disturbed by it" /translated from French/ (Hyades [1] :557).

/835 cont./ comfortable seating for many people and can be extended in length at will, so that all are safely under shelter.

The Yamana, however, are not satisfied with this plain construction, but decorate it to a considerable extent on the inside. They are satisfied artistically with painting simple designs on wood. Formerly when they did not have the European iron ax, they scraped the bark off single small trunks with mussel shells and painted their designs directly on the exposed wood fibers. This is still done, but nowadays they more often make long, narrow little tablets with their ax, which are placed against the framework on the interior, are slightly curved at the bottom, and form an arch up to the highest center line. They are placed 40 to 60 centimeters apart and usually in such a way that two are opposite each other.

Finally, in the upper part of the framework they fasten short, small, painted tablets and sticks which hang down freely. The latter are 25 to 35 centimeters long, cylindrical, with a smooth surface and ends cut off straight. The thinner end points downward. The little tablets are always long and narrow, 20 to 45 centimeters long, seven to ten centimeters wide, and the corners are either rounded or sharp. In the latter case, the wider of the two narrow sides ends in a short, square little handle into which a small hole is bored or a flat notch is cut. The little tablets and sticks, yēxalapáteg ikamanáki, are fastened by a tendon or reed stalk in the center of the vaulted framework where they hang down freely and lightly swing in the draft or the vibration of the framework (cf. the reproductions on Plates 2 and 3).

If the Yamana wish to paint these ornamental plaques, as well as the small trunks and long, small tablets, they use the customary colors, black, white, and red, which they mix with seal blubber. They apply this mixture with their fingers, arranging dots and lines in varied patterns. The person painting them follows his artistic inspiration of the moment and his feeling for beauty; hence all kinds of combinations of lines, dots, and circles appear in manifold variety.

The Yamana repeatedly assured me that these ornamental objects had no particular meaning and served exclusively to beautify /836/ their ciéraus hut (256). They are left there after

256. Reproductions of these ornamental plaques

X 881 346 •352 531

/836 cont./

and sticks with different patterns may be found in black and white in Koppers (a):48, and in color in Lothrop (b):126. In the latter reproductions, the background is too bright a yellow. It is not painted, but left in the natural color of the beech wood.

the ceremony is over (257), for such articles are not used in any

257. After my first initiation and later after my second, when I expressed the wish to take along a few of these ornamental objects, the Indians took down not only the long painted plaques and hanging sticks, but also removed the long thin pieces of wood and trunks out of the ground and gave them all to me without hesitation, further proof that they do not regard these things as having any value other than as decorations for the Great Hut during the initiation.

other way.

X 881 346 There is no partition anywhere inside the hut, and one can survey the whole without obstruction from one end to the other. Also, there is no particular allotment of areas and places to sit. The candidates with their sponsors squat between the other participants in an informal, relaxed arrangement. The adults, however, use the wider entrance, tumeci, almost exclusively, whereas the uiwala have contact with the outside world only by way of the narrower entrance, uiatumeci (258). The two entrances are so

258. BD:113 gives " 'uma,' position in or up..., up at the inner end of the room" /cited in English/.

arranged that the wider one for the adults faces the camp while the other one is nearer the woods so that the candidates, unobserved by children and adults in the camp, can disappear into it. Each of the entrances is closed off with a large piece of leather (259)

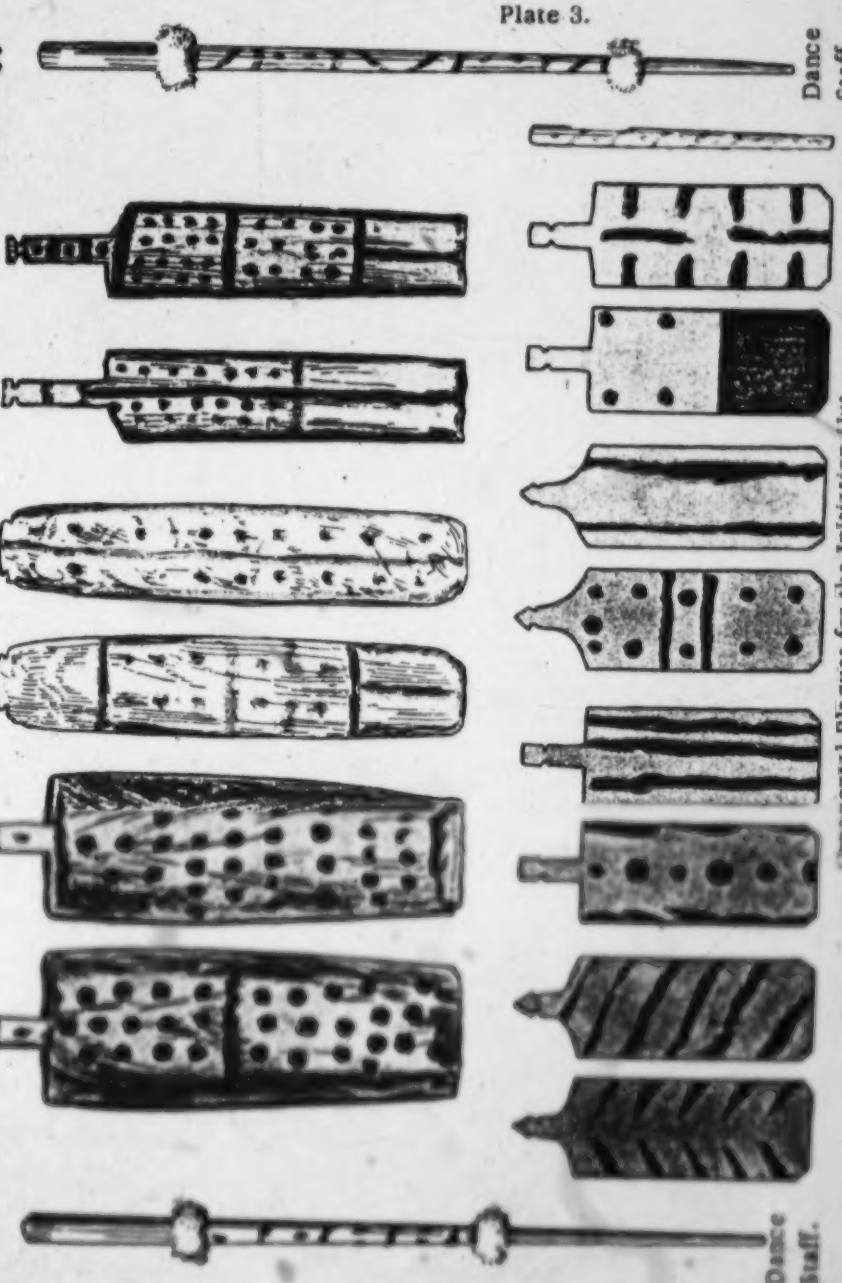
[177]

259. Nowadays they often use sacking and

1: Gusinde--807 E-5 (1918-1924) 1937 SH6 Yahgan SH6

Plate 3.

293
531
352



3: Lothrop E-5 (1924-1925) 1928
SH6 Yahgan SH6

346 352 531 To beautify the initiation lodge, the flat inner surface of the split saplings constituting the framework was painted with red, white, and black paint. Broad boards, inserted at regular intervals in the frame, as may be seen in the upper view in pl. XIV, received similar decoration. The nature of the embellishment is shown in pl. IX, a series of designs copied from the lodge we have described. When a ceremony was in progress the hut was further adorned with small painted tablets hung from the roof, while an additional touch of color came from painted wands (fig. 91) which often were wedged in the frame of the house when not in use.

FIG. 91.—Yahgan painted ceremonial wands. Length of *b*, 24 in. (14/2227½)

343 Two hundred feet or so from the initiation lodge a second and smaller hut was erected to serve as a cook-house where meals for the candidates and officials were prepared.

292 293 The paraphernalia used during the ceremony we illustrate in pl. XV and figs. 90 and 91. It consists of heron-plume headbands (*kapawára*) worn by the officials, kelp-goose down headbands (*pugal*) worn by the others present, a narrow hide headband painted white (*hehel*) worn by the initiate during part of the ceremony, a small stick also painted white (*w'matáwia*) used for scratching, and variously painted wands (*tuwoistáka*). The scratching-stick is assigned to all the Yahgan by Koppers (1925), but I was told that it was used only by the easterners. The wands were held in the hand during the singing and dancing, and were swung in time with the music. When not in use they were thrust upright in the ground or stuck in the frame of the lodge. If one fell on the ground it was considered an evil omen. I was told that these wands were not in use among the easterners. The men in charge of the ceremony kept at hand a seal-hide thong like that pictured in fig. 76, but adorned with closely spaced red dots; it was used to tie up any candidate who became unruly.